



News release

Hurricane Wilma strengthens to Category 5

19 October 2005

Hurricane Wilma has rapidly strengthened to become an extremely dangerous Category 5 hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson scale and now rates as the strongest Atlantic hurricane on record in terms of lowest central pressure.

At 7 a.m. UK time today, Wednesday, the centre of Hurricane Wilma was located near 17.0° North, 82.2° West, or about 170 miles south-south-west of Grand Cayman and about 400 miles south-east of Cozumel, Mexico.

Hurricane-force winds extend outwards up to 15 miles from the centre, and tropical storm-force winds extend outward up to 135 miles.

At 9 a.m. UK time today, Wednesday, latest minimum central pressure is 884 mb. Note: The central pressure dropped from 954 mb to 884 mb in nine hours (2300 GMT to 0800 GMT) and maximum sustained winds strengthened from 100 m.p.h. to 175 m.p.h. in the same time.

Hurricane Wilma is expected to move north-west for the next two days and will threaten the Yucatan Peninsula and western Cuba with heavy rain and strengthening winds. In the longer term, Hurricane Wilma is expected to make a sharp turn to the north-east and will be threatening southern Florida by the weekend.

As the situation develops in the coming days, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office web site gives advice on the situation for tourists or for people who have friends and family in the area.

For the latest satellite imagery from the area and information on the movement of the storm check the [Met Office tropical cyclone information page](#), which includes a link to the National Hurricane Center and major national weather services around the world.

[Latest tropical cyclone advisories](#)

[Travel advice from Foreign and Commonwealth Office](#)

[Media toolkit about hurricanes](#)

[More about tropical cyclones](#)

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